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SUBJECT: UAE FNC PASSES EXPORT CONTROL LAW

REF: ABU DHABI 422

¶1. (U) on February 24, the UAE's Federal National Council (FNC) debated on and passed the draft export control law with amendments. The law now returns to the UAE federal cabinet, which will make the changes and send the law to the UAE's Federal Supreme Council (rulers of the seven emirates) for ratification then for signature by the President. The law will come into force one month after publication in the official gazette. Since the law was considered under an expedited process, most FNC members and government officials Econchief and Econ Assistant talked to believed that the law would be signed quickly.

¶2. (SBU) The law consolidates rules for exports and imports under a federal umbrella and includes a chapter on "strategic goods" (i.e., military goods, dual use goods and technologies). According to Ministry of Economy Under Secretary Abdullah Al-Saleh, the list of controlled goods is

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copied from the list used by Singapore, and the law allows the annexes to be updated administratively. The law creates a strategic goods committee, with members drawn from the Ministries of Defense, Finance and Industry, Interior, Economy, Energy, and Health, State Security, the Civil Aviation Authority, Federal Customs Authority, Federal Environmental Authority, Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and representatives from all free trade zones. The law will also set up a licensing body.

¶3. (SBU) Debate was spirited, but largely not substantive. Members wanted to understand the reason for the law and for expedited passage. Some members proposed postponing debated on the law, because the Minister of Economy was not in attendance (Al-Saleh represented the Ministry). Once members voted to debate the law, the comments turned to requests for clarification and a certain amount of what one member described as posturing. According to MFA International Organizations Director Yacoub Al-Hosani, the government will need to clarify the definition of controlled goods slightly, but that he thought everything would move quickly. Both he and Al-Saleh confirmed that the law would not be going back to the FNC as the government would accept all amendments.

¶4. (U) Post received a FNC-provided draft copy of the law and mark-up in Arabic, which we will scan and pass to the Department.
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